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supreme of elegance. It will be seen, from what we have said, that the Nevius & Haviland wall-papers have a physiognomy all their own, and are invariably in demand by the best trade throughout the country.

WALL-PAPERS AND STENCILLING IN ENGLAND. III.

By J. R. SPENCE.

I have no sympathy with the common idea that you decrease the apparent height of your room by deep friezes, supposing you do suffer from the optical delusion of losing six inches. Is there not a sense of quaintness and comfort in a room that is low? At any rate, we all feel how pleasant and cosy are the old farmhouses with low timbered ceilings. This sense of snugness is well illustrated at the Chateau of Blois, where the timbered ceilings of the rooms are comparatively low, and are colored a sea green blue, to which is superadded an abundance of colored and stencilled ornament. There is a sense of restfulness and comfort in the two small ante-rooms (having ceilings of a similar character of decoration) which come between the two great halls or council chambers in the Ducal Palace in Venice. The vast pictures by Veronese and Tintoretto in the large halls are wonderful in themselves, but I venture to say they do not express the same quiet decorative fitness as do these small ante-rooms. The same may be said of the suite of small low-ceilinged rooms which were the favorite private apartments of Isabella d'Este, in the Ducal Palace at Mantau.

This palace is by many considered the most magnificent example of interior decoration of the Renaissance. Yet these rooms and their decorations only live in one's memory out of the hundreds of magnificent apartments in this vast palace. I can well imagine the haven of rest they must have been to the daughter of Ferraras, amidst the turbulent magnificence of the Gonzagos. Of course, they have the added charm of low windows and vistas of the Lombard plains. In the Palazzo Rezzonico is a magnificent suite of reception rooms decorated

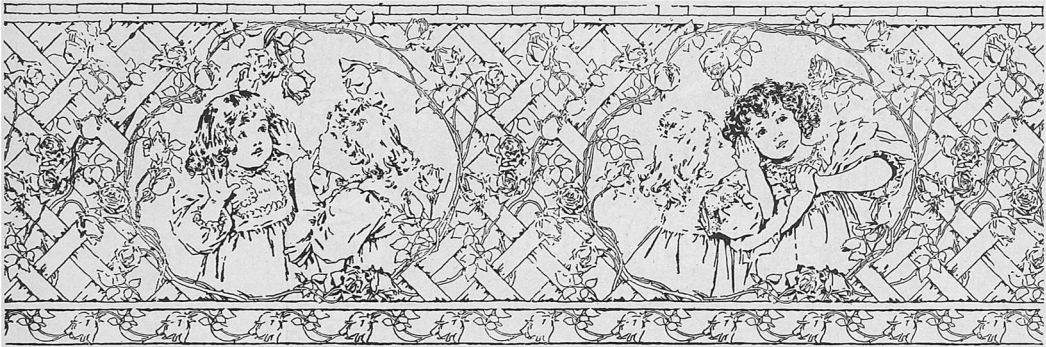
should say, avoid marbled wall-papers, even if a Tadema is outside your means.

The great weakness of English coloring is paucity. There is no reason why our wall-papers should not be fuller and richer, containing more primaries and less dirty tones.

The old Venetians revelled in the fullness of tones; why should we not follow their example, and take suggestions from their source of inspiration, which was the barbaric splendor of Eastern color? We all recognize and admire the redundant richness of color as found in Persian fabrics, Japanese lacquers, and Moresque tiles. If this wealth and brilliancy is a delight in sunnier lands, it should be doubly welcome to us, where grey days are our portion, and the consequent need of the joys of color charm all the greater.

It is an error to think that on a ground of strong color our pictures suffer. If we take care that our areas of color are flat and contain some sense of broad unity in the whole scheme, this will not occur. I mean in the absence of every disturbing or restless detail, such as we find in the elaborately printed efforts to reproduce naturalistic flowers, etc. I feel that these backgrounds may be as strong as you like, if the parts are well balanced, and each color of pretty near the same depth of tone. Gold or black picture frames are a sufficient separation. Besides, these being nearest the eye are made up of moldings, such modelled forms carrying the highest lights and the strongest darks, lift them clearly away from the merely surface color on which they hang. If you place any actual object on the most powerful painted picture, it will always tell as a strong disturbing element.

As the best French painters teach, the accessory, or object to be represented on the first plane, or nearest to the spectator, should carry the highest lights and the intensest darks. Strong lights may be used in the receding planes of the pictures; but, to express their relative relations, the gradations of the shadows must be weaker in degree as distances are expressed.



"SUB-ROSA" NURSERY FRIEZE. BY NEVIUS & HAVILAND.

by Tiepolo; attached to these is a suite of smaller rooms, delightfully quaint and low, showing that the old Venetians had combined with a love of magnificence a true appreciation of the pleasure to be found in a low and shadowed retreat. I by no means deprecate the fine sense of space and magnificence of rooms having large and generous dimensions, but we, who of necessity must live in apartments of small dimensions, should accept their proportions and devise our treatment accordingly, not cherishing the fallacy that good decoration consists of delusions of scale.

All papers used in staircases and other apartments where the light is defective should have their ornament bold and strong, delicate combinations of tones being reserved for rooms well lighted. There is a tradition that all ceilings should be light in scale. Well, many should be, but they may be successful in deeper and richer tones.

Remember the blue of a summer sky sometimes, as a suggestion. Gold on ordinary papers, when perfectly flat, is not always pleasant. The true glory of gold refuses to express itself except on undulating surfaces, where its metallic lustre is developed.

In coloring the surrounding woodwork of rooms, it is a comparatively safe rule to select a tint from some section of the ornament in the wall paper. In selecting wall, frieze and ceiling papers, it is well that the wall-paper should be the darkest in tone, the others ascending in the scale of light, and each having the same tints of color running through, but in varying degrees. This is recommended as avoiding an effect of disturbed harmony; but possessing a color instinct, daring arrangements of contrasts may be accomplished with success. I

This constructive method is, therefore, a question of values, so that the assertive expression of a molded form cannot be much weakened by a backing of flat color. Black or gold, even if assertive, is always valuable in any color scheme. No one knows this better than the Easterns, as you will find these two elements playing an important part in all their compositions.

When gold is used, it should be in liberal areas, not in thin strips, which is commonly known as "hatching." A common cry now is that what is termed an "all over" treatment is best; that is, the areas of the details of the design should be nearly all equal, so that no feature should obtrude itself in the design. I am not altogether in sympathy with this variation in areas; the treatment may be rendered quiet in effect by a nearer relationship of tones in the coloring. If certain strong elements in the design assert themselves in horizontal and perpendicular lines, why quarrel with such results, as nearly all fine expression in architecture is obtained by the accentuation of horizontal or vertical lines; triangular assertions of features are certainly objectionable.

I have every reverence for the great designs of the past and its suggestions, and there are certain dignified uniting lines and forms that we may well borrow from the Renaissance, or other periods of ornament, which are invaluable in the expression of vertical or horizontal forms necessary to fill certain decorative spaces, but underlying or woven into such valuable accentuating forms of expression there should be added something of the designer's own individuality or creation. I am sorry to see so much borrowed from the period of the decline of fine styles.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)